

ANNUAL REPORT

ON THE

HEALTH

OF THE

SWINTON (Yorks.) URBAN DISTRICT.

1905.

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MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.

MEXBOROUGH:

GEO. R. VENABLES, PRINTER AND STATIONER, SWINTON ROAD.

1905.

Vital and Mortal Statistics for the Year

1905.

1905.	England and Wales.	Great Towns (76).	Smaller Towns (141).	England & Wales <i>less</i> the 217 towns.	Swinton.
BIRTH-RATE	27·2	28·2	26·9	26·3	34·2
DEATH-RATE	15·2	15·7	14·4	14·9	14·4
Zymotic Death-rate	1·52	1·88	1·50	1·09	1·90
Infantile Mortality (per 1,000 births)..	128	140	132	113	148

It may be noted that the Birth-Rate, Death-Rate, and Infantile Mortality are lower than ever previously recorded for England and Wales.

Swinton Urban District Council.

MEDICAL OFFICER'S ANNUAL REPORT.

To the Chairman and Members of the Council.

GENTLEMEN,

I beg herewith to submit my Annual Report on the health of your district for the year ending December 31st, 1905.

The year has been a fairly healthy one, with the exception of the constant prevalence of Scarlet Fever of a mild type; also during January Influenza caused much sickness.

The shortage of water, and consequent very restricted supply, has been a serious sanitary defect.

The long-continued strike at Thrybergh Hall Colliery, although causing much distress in the district, has not made any apparent increase in sickness.

The Population, estimated to the middle of the year, was 13,450. The natural increase for the year—that is, the excess of births over deaths—amounts to 266.

The Births registered numbered 460—221 males and 239 females; 365 births were registered in Swinton and 95 in Kilnhurst. The birth rate was 34·2, the lowest yet recorded. The gradual lowering of the birth rate is to be deplored, the chief cause being a social evil, which is steadily increasing, and which adds to preventible sickness. The number of illegitimate births was 24.

The Deaths registered from all causes numbered 188—100 males and 88 females ; but it is necessary to add 6 deaths of residents who died in public institutions outside the district, making a total of 194, and a corrected death rate of 14·4. This is a satisfactory rate, as only twice has a similar low rate been recorded, namely, in 1894, 14·5, and in 1903, 14·5. The average death rate for the last 10 years is 17·5.

Infantile Death Rate.—The number of infants dying under one year was 68, the rate per thousand of registered births being 148. Only once has so low a rate been recorded, but this comparatively low rate is very much too high. The average infantile death rate for the last 10 years is 175.

Zymotic and Special Diseases.

Small-Pox.—No case of this disease was reported during the year.

Scarlet Fever.—Ninety cases were reported during the year, and probably several escaped recognition. The type was of a mild kind ; the serious cases occurred in overcrowded houses or where marked sanitary defects were present. Impure atmospheres not only have a tendency of producing a general lowering of the vitality of the patients, but also causes pronounced throat and brain complications. Fifty-seven cases were sent into hospital, two of which died. Kilnhurst remained free of the disease until July. No doubt the infection was several times re-introduced from neighbouring towns and districts.

Measles and Whooping-Cough, fortunately, were not prevalent during the year, but one death of the former and two of the latter were registered as due to them. They are not at present notifiable diseases ; but as the infant departments of schools are chiefly responsible for their general dissemination, one is always pleased when the school authorities report the first cases.

Typhoid or Enteric Fever.—Four cases were reported. They were at once removed to hospital, and all made good recoveries. The patients suffering from this disease do not only benefit by hospital treatment individually, but also the public, by their isolation, for our only alternative is to introduce a pail into the yard where the patient's home is, and use disinfectants freely—an unsafe and altogether an unsatisfactory method.

Diarrhœa.—Year after year, as soon as there is a continuance of hot weather, I have to report a number of infant deaths due to summer diarrhœa. One is not surprised; many women of the working classes are unable to suckle their babies, and they find it difficult to prevent the decomposition of milk, although usually taking the precaution to boil it. No doubt the privy middens and unpaved back yards are in a great measure responsible for the rapid multiplication of the germs of intestinal diseases.

Phthisis. — Eleven deaths from consumption were registered during the year, the rate being 0·8. This rate has been stationary for the last ten years, but it is decidedly lower than it was prior to the present decade, and also below the county rate. As is usual, 10 out of the 11 deaths took place about the prime of life. One feels that by the ventilation of bedrooms and staircases, and by constantly pointing out the great danger that lies lurking in the consumptive's sputum, a further marked reduction of deaths from this disease will take place. Five years ago I advised the voluntary notification of this disease. This year in two cases the ordinary notification fee has been paid, and in two or three other cases I have received verbal information from the medical attendant, and thus been able to visit and advise the patients' friends as to the dangers of infection. In each case of death the premises have been fumigated or cleansed.

Other Tubercular Diseases besides consumption caused 11 deaths. These were all children and infants. Probably milk from diseased cows has been the cause of some of these deaths.

Hospital Isolation.

The number of patients removed from their homes to the Joint Infectious Hospital has been 68, that is, 53 per cent. of the total number of cases notified. The cases were:—57 Scarlet Fever, 4 Enteric or Typhoid Fever, and 7 Diphtheria. On account of the prevalence of scarlet fever, the accommodation was not always sufficient. This must be the case during scarlet fever years, but I cannot advise for this reason only a larger expenditure in hospital isolation, but would rather trust to the gradual improvement in sanitation in preventing the disease reverting to the severe type of some years ago, and in the vigilance of your officers.

The Joint Hospital is popular in your district, the patients being apparently well cared for in every respect. During the year no “return” case has come to my notice.

It is worth while noting that the County Medical Officer reports that all Local Sanitary Authorities in the Riding except one are at the present time provided for the isolation of the infected sick, and the one exception has a loan sanctioned and plans of a hospital prepared.

Houses of the Working Classes.

The entire population of your district may be said to be composed of, or in some way or other directly interested in, the working classes ; their dwellings and surroundings become therefore of much sanitary importance in our war against preventible diseases. During the year 32 new houses or workmen’s cottages have been certified ; no house has been condemned as unfit for habitation, but cases of overcrowding of persons in houses are numerous.

Some of the new houses are superior to the usual working man’s cottage, and the sites are good ; yet I should like to see a greater variety of type of cottages, more especially a cottage better adapted for the needs of a large family.

I have reported twice to you on this subject at your monthly meetings, and suggested that you should become possessors of one or more good building sites, lay the ground out, and encourage builders to place thereon sanitary and scientifically planned workmen's houses, every satisfactory plan to be registered ; thus object lessons would be obtained, not only in the planning of an estate, but also in cottage building.

As a rule a cottage has a front room, which is practically of no use to the family, and a dark unventilated staircase ; a cottage with one large living room, about 21 feet by 12, and a scullery, with three bedrooms above, all having fireplaces, and a staircase with light and ventilation, is to be preferred for the healthy bringing up of a family. Every house should have a ventilated larder, and the time has now come when some form of folding bath, supplied from the copper, is not too much of a luxury to be expected in a coal miner's cottage.

A register of suitable houses for lodgers would also probably help to prevent overcrowding.

Water Supply.

The water has been of the usual quality, but deficient in quantity, throughout the whole of the year. The very inadequate Piccadilly supply complained of in former reports has been so far removed that the hamlet has not suffered more than other parts of the district from shortage.

A restricted supply of water is not only inconvenient, but increases the danger of pollution ; for several hours water must be stored in vessels of some kind or obtained from suspicious or condemned sources.

In Victoria Street and some other parts of the district complaints were made that house gas was escaping into the water mains. No doubt other and more dangerous pollutions, but not so easily recognised, were liable to be drawn into the pipes during the hours that the water was cut off.

The flushing of sewers and the washing of narrow courts with a hose during the hot dry weather is not done when there is a restricted supply; in fact, with so small a quantity, the sanitary condition of the district can never be of the highest order.

The amount supplied last year was 10·3 gallons per head per day. This is too small for a coal mining district, where several gallons must be used in every household for personal ablution. The time, moreover, has now come when every self-respecting working man desires that his family should have the use of a bath and w.c. At present the number of baths in the district are only 84, the number of w.c.'s 241, automatic flush closets 102, and 18 waste water closets; the public urinals also require a better supply.

One has noticed from time to time a permanent decrease in the mortality of some towns after the introduction of a better supply of water.

Sewerage.

Mr. Fowler reports that the drainage of White Lee Road, complained of in last year's report, has been connected with the main system, and dangerous drains under one or more houses removed. He also reports that the Kilnhurst portion of the system is in better order than it has been for some time, although houses in Hooton Road still drain into the river or elsewhere.

Removal of Refuse.

The number of complaints as to the condition of the privy middens has not been so numerous as in previous years, although the work has been done by contractors instead of your own sanitary staff.

I would again urge a more frequent removal during the summer weather in the more thickly populated parts. Nests of midden privies in the centres of rows of houses need much attention or ill health and nuisances must necessarily be the consequence.

Cowsheds and Milkshops.

These have all been inspected, and improvements are gradually being made.

A large cowshed in Kilnhurst, although fairly well kept by the tenant, and the cows are also turned out daily throughout the winter, is badly constructed, and has neither light, ventilation, nor pavement as required by your regulations.

The Workshops.

A few fresh ones have been put on the register. Upon the whole they are in a fairly healthy condition, but some are not kept as clean as they should be.

I am obediently
Yours
G. E. L. W.

Feb 16th / 06.



INSPECTOR'S WORK.

Regulated Buildings.	Number.		General Condition.
	Regis-tered.	Inspec-tions.	
Common Lodging Houses	None.		
Canal Boats.....	9	36	Good habitable condition.
Slaughter Houses	19	19	Clean and in order.
Bake Houses	2	2	In good condition.
Workshops	29	29	Fair.
Cowsheds	14	14	Both good and bad.

NUISANCES.

Total No. of Nuisances in hand at close of 1904.....	7
At close of 1905.....	6
Reported during 1905	90
Abated during 1905	91

TABLE I.

SHEWING THE NUMBER OF REGISTERED
CAUSES OF DEATH OCCURRING DURING
1905 AT SUBJOINED AGES.

Cause of Death.	All Ages.	Under 1 year.	1 and under 5.	5-15.	15-25.	25-65.	65 and upwards.
Small Pox	0	..	..	..	..	..	..
Measles	1	..	1	..	..	..	..
Scarlet Fever.....	2	1	1	..	..	..	..
Whooping Cough	2	1	1	..	..	..	..
Diphtheria	2	..	2	..	..	..	..
Typhoid or Enteric	0	..	..	..	..	..	..
Epidemic Influenza	4	..	..	..	..	4	..
Enteritis	4	3	1	..	..	..	..
Diarrhœa.....	19	15	4	..	..	..	..
Puerperal Fever	3	..	..	..	2	1	..
Erysipelas	0	..	..	..	..	..	..
Phthisis	11	..	1	..	2	8	..
Other Tubercular Diseases	11	3	3	5	..	..	..
Cancer	8	..	..	..	..	3	5
Bronchitis	14	4	1	..	..	5	4
Pneumonia	13	4	7	..	..	1	1
Alcoholism	1	..	..	..	..	1	..
Premature Birth	7	7	..	..	..	..	..
Heart Diseases	13	..	..	..	1	8	4
Accidents.....	5	..	..	2	..	3	..
Suicides	2	..	..	..	..	2	..
Parturition	1	..	..	..	..	1	..
All other causes	62	29	5	1	3	9	15

TABLE II.

SHOWING THE NUMBER OF INFECTIOUS
DISEASES NOTIFIED DURING THE YEAR
1905 AT SUBJOINED AGES.

Notifiable Diseases.	At all ages.	Under 1 year.	1-5.	5-15.	15-25.	25-65.	65 and upwards.
Small Pox .....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Cholera .....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Diphtheria..	14	..	5	9	..	..	..
Erysipelas	15	1	2	2	2	8	..
Scarlet Fever.....	90	..	31	52	6	1	..
Typhus Fever .....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Typhoid or Enteric Fever.....	4	..	..	..	3	1	..
Puerperal Fever	3	..	..	2	1	..	..
Consumption	2	..	..	..	1	1	..